

Some Recent, Significant California Spills

Spill	Date	Location & Other Info	Est. Volume – Gallons
KINDER MORGAN/ DONNER SUMMIT	4/1/05	Kinder Morgan pipeline leaked gasoline under snow, near Donner Ski Ranch. Wildlife impact unknown, as of 6/12/05.	unknown
PACIFIC PIPELINES/ PYRAMID LAKE	3/23/05	Angeles National Forest, Posey Canyon; Crude oil transmission line 63 broke in landslide; At least 9 birds killed.	126,000
KINDER MORGAN/ OAKLAND ESTUARY	2/4/05	Port of Oakland, Berth 70; pipeline in port leaked jet-A fuel into storm drains. 16 oiled birds – Mostly coots – collected. Two died.	500
VENTURA OILED SEABIRDS INCIDENT	1/11/05	Over 1,528 seabirds – mostly western/Clark's grebes, several loons, brown pelicans, eared grebes, surf scoters, Brandt's & Pelagic cormorants oiled, between Santa Barbara & Venice. At Least 1,272 died. 2 CA sea lions oiled. Oil source unknown.	unknown
PALO ALTO/ SEACLIFF STATE BEACH	9/11/05	Cormorants oiled by going into tank of old cement ship grounded at State beach in 1929. At least 20 cormorants killed, recently.	unknown
KINDER MORGAN/ BAKER	11/22/04	Gasoline pipeline leak erupted in a geyser spewing hundreds of gals. Into the desert between Barstow & Las Vegas. No wildlife injuries identified.	unknown
KINDER MORGAN/ SUISUN MARSH	4/27/04	S. of Cordelia/Fairfield; corroded pipeline burst; spilled diesel into wetlands habitat. About 100 nesting birds were in the spill area, but few were captured. Known oiled: 33 birds & 30 mammals. Known dead: 28 birds & 24 mammals. (as of 8/24/04)	>104,000
ARDEN PROPERTIES/ LOS ANGELES	10/8/03	Storage tank overflowed to Centinella Creek; killed small fish & invertebrates.	4,300
DREDGE MONARCH/ SHAG SLOUGH	9/7/03	Liberty Island, Sacramento River delta; sunken, abandoned dredge barge oiled 2 mi. vegetated shore & rip-rap; diesel & waste oil.	thousands

SAN MATEO MYSTERY/ SS JACOB LUCKENBACH	11/24/01	Oiled over 2,270 birds (mostly c. murre) between Pt. Reyes & Big Sur, for over a year. At least 2,000 died; 278 rescued & released. Response & removal of 100,000 gals oil from sunken freighter took 10 months & cost \$20 million (fed fund).	unknown
MARINA SB TARBALLS/ MONTEREY	9/12/01	Marina State Beach; tarballs washed ashore from Watsonville to Pacific Grove. 3 birds oiled; 2 dead. Over 125 lbs oily debris.	unknown
AFFS/WALKER RIVER	12/30/00	Tanker-truck overturned on SR 182 (Mono Co.); #6 fuel oil spilled into East fork of Walker River, oiling 10 miles to NV. Driver killed; oil killed at least 2 beavers, 3 birds, & 25 fish.	3,608
COX/MUSSEL SHOALS	4/9/00	Tanker-truck overturned on U.S. 101; gas spilled into active tide pool. 2 golden plovers & thousands of crustaceans, invertebrates and fish killed.	6,100
AERA-TAYLOR 157/ VENTURA COUNTY	4/9/00	Pipeline gathering line broke, spilling crude oil into a tributary of Diablo Creek. Killed merganser, trout & other fish & invertebrates.	546
IMC/TRONA	2/23/00	Mineral processing plants' oil leaking into Searles Lake, 40 mi. west of Death Valley. Has killed thousands of migrating birds; may have been leaking for decades.	unknown
STECKLE PARK VENTURA COUNTY	2/28/00	Tanker truck went off mountain hwy., killed driver, & spilled light crude into Santa Paula Creek; flows into Santa Clara River.	6,000
STOCKDALE/OILDALE	10/25/99	Crude oil storage tank overflowed, due to human error. At least 200 birds in nearby marshland died, including bi-colored, tri-colored, and red-winged blackbirds.	25,200
BALLONA CREEK/ CULVER CITY	10/11/99	Renaissance Apartments' oil-water separator malfunctioned, allowing natural seep crude oil to reach storm drain. 5 birds treated & released; 1 dead, oiled grebe collected.	500

<i>M/V STUYVESANT</i> / EUREKA	9/6/99	Hull cracked by dredging device at entrance to Humboldt Bay. IFO 180 fuel oil.	>2,000
AERA/ORANGE COUNTY (offshore)	6/5 & 10/27/99	Pipeline leak between Platforms Elly, Eureka & Ellen, due to corrosion. 6 oiled grebes observed.	720
<i>M/V ARMACOST</i>- PEMEX/ROSARITO BEACH, BAJA CALIFORNIA (Mexico)	5/12/99	Chevron-owned tanker spilled #6 fuel oil during offshore transfer. At least 4 oil-soaked grebes caught near San Diego died.	151,000
THOMAS-BRINDLE OIL/ HUNTINGTON BEACH	1-2/99	Crude oil discharged from well, oiled over 100 birds. At least 14 died; 21 treated & released.	< 42
WINTERSBURG CHANNEL/ HUNTINGTON BEACH (BOLSA CHICA)	12/13/98	Garden Grove-Huntington Beach; Waste hauler Richard Ogle, Sr. illegally dumped waste motor oil, instead of pumping-out, @ GG City yard. He pled guilty & got 45 days in jail, \$20k fine, & 200 hrs. community service (100 @ OWCN facility!). Killed dozens of birds.	200-300
WADSWORTH CANAL/ SUTTER COUNTY	12/8/98	Illegal dump, diesel, into ag canal. 27 miles polluted. Land-owner took responsibility & paid ACTI \$73,000.	unknown
<i>M/T NEAPOLIS</i> / PORT OF LONG BEACH	11/10/98	Loading crane broke, fell onto cargo lines during crude oil transfer.	6,300
<i>M/T COMMAND</i> / SAN FRANCISCO	9/26/98	Illegal dump, IFO 180 fuel oil, into s/b shipping lanes, off San Francisco. Killed at least 170 birds, incl. endangered CA brown pelicans. Oiled 15 miles of shoreline; clean-up cost govt. \$1.23 million. RP: Anax Int'l. & Capt. Dimitrios Georgantas; \$9.4 million criminal & civil penalties; Capt. Georgantas was banned from U.S. ports until 2002.	3,000
TEXACO/VENTURA	2/14/98	Landslide broke crude pipelines in hills above Ventura (Sanjon Barranca). Wildlife impact unknown, if any.	8,400
TORCH/BARDSDALE	1/24/98	Leaking pipeline; crude oil	up to 21,000
PT. REYES TAR BALLS	11/16/97	Unknown origin; over 1500 dead sea birds collected	unk.
TEXACO/MARTINEZ	11/19/97	Pipeline leak @ Peyton Slough; crude oil	1,700

<i>MV KURE/</i> HUMBOLDT BAY	11/5/97	Pacific Lumber dock; IFO 180 fuel oil; punctured fuel tank. Killed 700+ birds & 1 harbor seal. Clean-up cost over \$12 million, per PR.	4,537
TORCH-NUEVO PLATFORM IRENE/ PEDERNALES POINT	9/28/97	North end of Santa Barbara Channel, off Lompoc; Crude oil pipeline leak between Platform Irene & shore; metal on flange either got <i>too hot</i> or wasn't hot <i>enough</i> , when welded; metal later cracked circumference of pipe. Killed 170+ birds.	3,910-6,850
SANTA FE PACIFIC PIPELINES/DONNER	3/1/97	Donner Summit; gas, diesel, & jet fuel Underground pipeline break; actual cause and duration of leak unknown.	unknown
UNION PACIFIC RR	2/26/97	Norden; red diesel fuel; transfer pipe break	17,500+
<i>CAPE MOHICAN-SFDD/</i> SAN FRANCISCO	10/28/96	SF Bay, Pier 70; Bunker-C fuel oil. (Released about 96,000 gals., but estimate only 40,000 went into Bay waters.) Wildlife Mortality: Two pond turtles dead; 200+ birds believed dead; at least 4,000 animals affected; herring spawning habitat affected.	40,000
CHEVRON/ARROYO PASSAJERO	3/11/95	Crude oil pipeline spill	6,000
SHELL COMPLEX/MTZ.	1/27/94	Martinez; pipeline; diesel fuel	50,400
ARCO/SANTA CLARA RIVER	1/94	pipeline; crude oil (Caused by major Northridge earthquake)	193,494
MCGRATH LAKE/ OXNARD	12/25/93	Ventura Co.; Berry Petroleum pipeline; crude oil; Wildlife Mortality (est.): at least 250 water birds known dead	84,000
ARCO/GRAPEVINE CREEK	4/93	Pipeline, crude oil; southern San Joaquin Valley (Grapevine)	260,400
UNOCAL/AVILA I AVILA BEACH	8/3/92	SLO County: Unocal Pipeline; crude oil Wildlife Mortality (est.): at least 100+ sea birds; 3 sea otters known dead. (*Unocal PR staff insist they only spilled 25,200 gallons. . .)	*88,200
NUEVO/PLTFRM GINA	5/91	off Ventura County (Pt. Hueneme)	1,050

CHEVRON/ EL SEGUNDO	3/91	L.A. County; crude oil; ship's anchor dropped onto Chevron pipeline.	10,000
MOBIL/SANTA CLARA RIVER	1/31/91	Pipeline M-70 break at Valencia; crude oil Wildlife mortality est.: 200 birds killed & 15 miles of riverside habitat damaged.	74,634
<i>M/V SAMMI SUPERSTAR</i> L.A. HARBOR	1/8/91	Bunker fuel	13,000
<i>VESSEL ART REIDEL</i>	10/15/90	off Point Piños; diesel & lube oil	3,267
<i>AMERICAN TRADER/</i> HUNTINGTON BEACH	2/7/90	Ship sat on own anchor, punctured tank. Crude. White sea bass fishery damaged; at least 1,000 sea birds known dead. Closed 15 miles of Orange County beaches for five weeks.	416,000
AVILA II/AVILA BEACH	1989	SLO County: Unocal Pipeline; crude oil, gasoline, & diesel products contaminating ground under the town of Avila Beach	400,000
SHELL COMPLEX/ MARTINEZ	4/23/88	Carquinez Straits, Contra Costa County Killed hundreds of birds & mammals. (Some estimate amount up to 432,000 gallons)	365,400
UNOCAL/GUADALUPE BEACH	1/88	Southern SLO Bay dunes, n. of Santa Maria River; 3,000 acres of contaminated land. Unocal fined \$1.5 million.	8-20 million
(NO-NAME) 300' BARGE	12/87	13 mi. off Año Nuevo State Beach; oil	16,400
<i>PAC BARONESS</i>	9/21/87	Pt. Conception, Santa Barbara Channel Collided w/another vessel; lost 40,000 gals in first 5 days; sank in 3,000 feet of water.	386,400
TUG CHALLENGER	5/10/87	off Santa Maria River mouth, diesel	18,000
<i>APEX HOUSTON</i>	2/86	off Central California Coast; crude oil. At least 10,000 sea birds known dead. Wiped-out Devils Slide Rock common murre colony.	25,900
L.A. BERTH 240-A	1/86	Los Angeles Harbor; oil	19,000

NAVY BARGE YSR25	10/85	Naval Station/Long Beach; oil	35,000
UNOCAL/GUSTINE	1984	next to CA Aqueduct, S. of Gustine; crude oil. Not thoroughly cleaned-up; caused problem in 7/97.	42,000
<i>C/T PUERTO RICAN/</i> SAN FRANCISCO	10/31/84 3:24 am	Chemical tanker broke up, 8-9 mi. outside Golden Gate after two explosions near tanks Aft-third sank. Chevron oil; Keystone Shipping Co.	1.62 million
TOSCO REFINERY/ MARTINEZ (AVON)	1/80	Carquinez Strait slough; crude oil	10,000
<i>T/V JOHN MCCONE/</i> LOS ANGELES	12/28/80	Chevron crude oil; hole in hull of the tank vessel John A. McCone.	105,000
<i>ARCO ENDEAVOR</i>	12/79	Monterey Bay, oil	3,360
<i>CHEVRON MANHATTAN/</i> LOS ANGELES	9/20/77	Fuel tank overflowed in marine terminal; crude oil (in fuel tank?)	2,100
<i>SANSINENA/</i> LOS ANGELES	12/17/76	Los Angeles Harbor	1.26 million
STANDARD OIL/ SAN FRANCISCO	1/71	Chevron tankers <i>Oregon</i> & <i>California</i> collided inside Golden Gate, in thick fog. Crude-oiled entire Bay Area; wildlife devastated.	900,000
UNION OIL PLATFORM-A/ SANTA BARBARA	1/28/69	Santa Barbara Channel well; crude oil; Over 11 days, 200,000 gals of oil spread into an 800-square-mile slick; coated 35 miles of beachfront. Thousands of oil-soaked birds, dolphins and seals, otters & other mammals killed. Gray whales began avoiding the channel that was a route to their Baja breeding grounds. \$17.3 million in damages paid to local residents & boat owners, State of California, Santa Barbara County & cities of Santa Barbara and Carpinteria. Worst spill in recent California history; launched U.S. ecology movement.	4,200,000

(NOTE: 1 barrel ♠ = 42 gallons)

For comparisons: The *intentional* spilling of oil in the Persian Gulf during the 1991 Persian Gulf War dumped 37.8 billion gallons (900,000,000 bbl), oiling 400-500 miles of the Saudi Arabian coast. Oil formed crusts under the intertidal zone, and sank so deeply into coastal soils that removal was impracticable. A report by UNESCO stated that the spill devastated plant and animal life in the region of Kuwait to Abu Ali. Time estimates for natural flushing of the oil from this region exceed 30 years.

Oil spill **clean-up costs** vary widely because of differences in the type of oil spilled, weather and water conditions, topography, wildlife presence, response preparedness of local governing bodies, proximity to developed harbors, roads, and human population centers, and even the sociological, economic, and political conditions at the time. For example, because of our stringent regulations, great public concern for the environment, and basic legal tenet that “the polluter pays,” oil spills in California are among the most expensive in the world to clean-up. The fact that California has a large, well-trained spill response community with the best available technology — which is mobilized whenever a large spill occurs — also contributes to the high cost of spills, here.